



Student: **Michael Higley-Vance**

**THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETELY FILLED IN**

**Follow these procedures:** If requested by your instructor, please include an assignment cover sheet. This will become the first page of your assignment. In addition, your assignment header should include your last name, first initial, course code, dash, and assignment number. This should be left justified, with the page number right justified. For example:

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**Save a copy of your assignments:** You may need to re-submit an assignment at your instructor's request. Make sure you save your files in accessible location.

**Academic integrity:** All work submitted in each course must be your own original work. This includes all assignments, exams, term papers, and other projects required by your instructor. Knowingly submitting another person's work as your own, without properly citing the source of the work, is considered plagiarism. This will result in an unsatisfactory grade for the work submitted or for the entire course. It may also result in academic dismissal from the University.

**EDU7707-8**

**Dr. Leslie Oja**

**Planning Dissertation Research in Education**

**Activity #6: Brief Literature Review**

**Comments:** This is an integrative literature review.

**Assignment 6**

**Literature Review**

**Learning Outcomes**

9.0 Evaluate and apply critical thought to research articles in order to compose a literature review in an area of research interest.

**Assignment 7 – Due Sunday, December 14, 2014**

For this assignment, using any one or all of the books or articles in the dissertation planning resources, the course's supplemental resources or any other book or web site of your choice as a guide, write a paper in which you discuss possible obstacles to completing your dissertation and strategies you will use to avoid or overcome them, and generally, how you will take care of

yourself throughout the rest of your career as a doctoral student. Or, if you don't want in any way to focus on negatives, identify the positives you will embrace to keep on a path to success!

Refer to the Concept Paper Template and the Dissertation Handbook as references to any questions you may have regarding the dissertation process.

The paper does not have to be in APA format. Actually, it should be in a format that is easy for you to refer to and use. Print it and keep it by your desk or save it as an icon on your desktop. If your plan includes making a plan or a timeline as part of this assignment, keep that handy too.

Length: 2-3 pages not including title and reference pages.

A page of text is 350 words to accommodate spacing, word length, and punctuation.

#### Northcentral University Grading Guidelines – Graduate Scoring

Numerical Points	Letter Grade	Descriptor	Explanation
100-94	A	Excellent	Completes <b>all</b> required parts of the assignment, demonstrates <b>deep</b> understanding of materials, uses <b>very</b> clear and effective expression appropriate to scholarly writing, and has <b>very few or no</b> errors in grammar, mechanics, APA form and style, and APA formatting.
93-90	A-		
89-87	B+	Good	Completes <b>all or most</b> required parts of the assignment, demonstrates <b>good</b> understanding of readings, uses <b>mostly</b> clear and effective expression appropriate to scholarly writing, and has <b>few</b> errors in grammar, mechanics, APA form and style, and APA formatting.
86 - 83	B		
82-80	B-	Fair	Completes <b>most</b> required parts of the assignment, demonstrates <b>some</b> understanding of the readings, and writing is <b>somewhat</b> clear, effective, and scholarly, and has <b>some</b> errors in grammar, mechanics, APA form and style, and APA formatting.
79-77	C+		
76-73	C	Poor	Completes <b>some</b> required parts of the assignment, demonstrates <b>some</b> understanding of readings, and writing is <b>difficult to understand</b> and <b>unscholarly</b> and has <b>several</b> errors in grammar, mechanics, APA form and style, and APA formatting.
72-0	F	Unacceptable	Completes <b>few</b> required parts of the assignment, demonstrates <b>little</b> understanding of readings, and writing is <b>difficult to understand</b> and <b>unscholarly</b> and has <b>many</b> errors in grammar, mechanics, APA form and style, and APA formatting.

#### Using the Grading Guidelines for Success

**A.** The Northcentral University Grading Guidelines are designed to ensure that faculty and students have a shared understanding of assignment quality. Carefully reviewing the guidelines can help you plan and complete your assignments to the best of your ability.

**B.** The grading guidelines are based on four assignment criteria. Keep these in mind as you complete an assignment:

1. Assignment completion (highlighted in **orange**) – the extent to which you have followed assignment instructions.
2. Understanding of materials (highlighted in **green**) – the extent to which you have demonstrated understanding of readings or other materials.

3. Expression (highlighted in blue) – the extent to which your expression is clear, effective, and appropriate for scholarly writing.

4. Grammar, mechanics, APA (highlighted in purple) – the extent to which you have used correct grammar, word choice, punctuation, APA form and style, and APA formatting.

C. Your instructor will ignore criteria not relevant to an assignment (e.g., discussion posts and reflections need only follow APA formatting for citations and references).

D. Submission of an assignment that is outside of the page length (or slide number) parameters may result in a request for a re-submission that meets the parameters or a one step reduction of a grade (e.g., from A- to B+), at a faculty member's discretion.

#### Faculty Use Only

<Faculty comments here>

Michael,

The literature review demonstrated a well-developed foundation for supporting the research topic. The literature review was an in-depth discussion of computers and reading to support the research topic. The addition of specific computer programs used and the results with students should add value to the concept paper as the discussion will provide evidence for recommendations with the dissertation. The literature review also demonstrated improved writing for research and the use of APA form and style and formatting.

Assignment 6 demonstrated completing all required parts of the assignment, demonstrates deep understanding of materials, uses very clear and effective expression appropriate to scholarly writing, and has very few errors in grammar, mechanics, APA form and style, and APA formatting.

A 100% Dr. Oja 12 10 2014

<Faculty Name>

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<Writing Score>

<Date Graded>

### Brief Literature Review

Michael Higley

Northcentral University

### Brief Integrative Literature Review

The purpose of this proposed study is to improve Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) Reading Achievement scores in a local middle school using two computer-assisted reading intervention programs to address at-risk student gaps in reading literacy. There has been a growing concern in Tennessee with regards to Literacy in K-12 public education. Literacy needs of middle school readers are being targeted as achievement gaps and the pressure to address these gaps has increased since the implementation of the new evaluation model initiated by Race to the Top in Tennessee. Computer-assisted intervention programs have shown to improve reading literacy (Saine, Lerkkanen, Ahonen, Tolvanen, & Lyytinen, 2011). Additionally, research has revealed that a constructivist computer-assisted learning model increases students' knowledge construction and retention (Saine et al., 2011).

Several different reading approaches have been successful due to a combination of approaches during whole group, small group, and differentiated instruction. Many approaches, however, have not been successful revealing only 9% of eighth graders who were considered at-

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risk students met the basic requirements set forth by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in reading (NAEP, 2013). This number, coupled with the pressure from Race to the Top initiatives in Tennessee, has made addressing at-risk students in reading a high priority.

The purpose of this paper is to present a brief review of the literature relevant to the proposed study. This literature review is organized into the following sections: (a) an overview of necessary reading skills and strategies, (b) targeted reading interventions, and (c) an introduction to computer-assisted instruction. Each section provides research-based evidence, which supports the components of a constructivist computer-assisted learning model that make up the proposed study.

### Necessary Reading Skills and Strategies

Not all students become proficient readers and those students not at proficiency often fall into the category of tier two or three interventions for at-risk readers. The National Reading Panel (2001) defined five reading skills in which a reader must master in order to become proficient readers. The five reading skills include phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Students who are at-risk in reading benefit from explicit and systematic intervention organized around fluency, comprehension, and phonemic awareness (Roberts, Vaughn, Fletcher, Stuebing, & Barth, 2013; Vaughn et al., 2012).

### Reading Skills

**Phonemic awareness.** Phonemic awareness is the ability to identify and recognize similar sounds in different words. This skill is important for students to be able to pronounce unknown words. This can be very confusing for students because some sounds represent two or more letters. Phonics is the ability to understand how letters are linked to sounds and spelling

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patterns. In one study, researchers found that significant gains in fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension were achieved with intensive phonological remediation (Fälth, Gustafson, Tjus, Heimann, & Svensson, 2013).

**Fluency and Vocabulary.** Fluency is the ability to read accurately, quickly, and effortlessly. Apart of becoming a fluent reader is being able to read sight words and learning between 2,500 and 3,000 new words each year. The ability to read fluently and understand unfamiliar vocabulary was found to be closely linked to improved reading (Solis, Miciak, Vaughn, & Fletcher, 2014). At-risk readers typically struggle with sight words and retention of newer more difficult words (Little, McCoach, & Reis, 2014). Additionally, poor fluency results in poor comprehension (National Reading Panel, 2001; Solis et al., 2014).

**Comprehension.** Comprehension helps at-risk readers make connections between existing knowledge and new information from the text (Solis et al., 2014). Comprehension of text allows the reader to draw inferences, ask questions, and create a visual of the text. When readers are able to comprehend what they are reading, readers can synthesize information across texts and reading experiences (National Reading Panel, 2001).

### **Reading Strategies**

The addition of five reading strategies, intended to compliment the Reading Panel's list, includes classroom arrangement, connecting the relationship between reading and writing, ensuring students are reading appropriate leveled texts, providing opportunities for choice and collaboration, and providing students with prompt feedback (Allington, 2005). At-risk readers often have trouble implementing the aforementioned skills; together, the 10 components of effective reading assist at-risk students in becoming better readers (Allington, 2005; National

Reading Panel, 2001). Research reveals that intensive reading remediation significantly improves student literacy (Fälth et al., 2013).

### Target Reading Interventions

Addressing the needs of at-risk readers is necessary, but how the instruction takes place varies. There are a number of studies, which detail the importance of early reading intervention. In an experimental study, designed to deliver extensive independent reading intervention, researchers analyzed the effects a reading only intervention program had on student achievement (Little, McCoach, & Reis, 2014). Researchers reported that targeted reading interventions had a significant impact on struggling readers (Little et al., 2014). In another study, Williams (2014) reported a need to deliver focused reading intervention time, requiring reluctant readers to engage in sustained reading. Due to the number of studies supporting the benefits of computer-assisted learning and the efficacy of reading interventions on student literacy, it is reasonable to hypothesize a positive connection between the two.

There are a number of computerized reading intervention programs that have been studied and analyzed to determine the level of efficacy on improving student literacy. At-risk readers had higher reading scores using computer-assisted technology than compared to struggling readers who did not have the same technology access (Amendum, Vernon-Feagans, & Ginsberg, 2011). The Targeted Reading Intervention (TRI) program was designed to deliver real time, long-distance reading intervention coaching to teachers using web-cam technology to assist in providing 15-minute reading interventions. In a supporting study conducted by Falth, Gustafson, Tjus, Heimann, and Svesson (2013), a computerized reading intervention program was utilized to determine the effectiveness of three specific areas of reading literacy, which included reading comprehension. Furthermore, in an additional study, researchers used a

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computer-assisted program called Carry-A-Tune (CAT) to analyze its effectiveness as a reading intervention for struggling middle school students (Biggs, Homan, Dedrick, Minick, & Rasinski, 2008). Researchers found that there was a significant improvement in both reading comprehension and instruction using CAT (Biggs et al., 2008).

### Scholastic's *Read 180*

In a quantitative study, Cheung and Slavin (2013) reported that *Read 180* produced positive, but unexceptional effects on the reading skills of struggling readers compared to that of traditional face-to-face instruction. Additional research supported that the *Read 180* program lacked conclusive evidence to support the efficacy of the program (Parker, Holland, & Jones, 2013). In a qualitative study designed to investigate how English Language Learners (ELL) responded to the *Read 180* program, researchers reported that the remedial program had no significant impact (Wu & Coady, 2010). Researchers concluded that the *Read 180* model did not offer cultural knowledge, experiences, and was unable to respond to unique cultural needs of ELL students (Wu & Coady, 2010). Additionally, Kim, Samson, Fitzgerald, and Hartry (2010) reported on the casual effects *Read 180* had on measures of vocabulary and reading fluency. The study included two groups of students who were randomly assigned to either the *Read 180* program or a less structured after-school reading program. Researchers reported that there was no significant difference between students participating in the *Read 180* program and that of the after-school program on measures of vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension (Kim et al., 2010). Furthermore, researchers reported the study yielded no statistically significant differences in student achievement score between the groups (Kim et al., 2010).

In a later study, Kim, Capotosto, Hartry, and Fitzgerald (2011) conducted an independent randomized control study, which evaluated the efficacy of *Read 180* on measures of vocabulary,

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**Comment [6]:** This section of literature review is significant in framing the foundation for the research study. Comparing and contrasting authors results in a rich discussion of opposing views leading to authors supporting the research topic and why they support the topic. The foundation of the literature review should also support the research questions. There is evidence that this section will provide support for the research questions.



reading comprehension, spelling, and fluency. The study was designed very similarly to the Kim et al. (2010) study. Contrary to the Kim et al. (2010) study, Kim et al. (2011) reported that there was indeed a positive and statistically significant impact on student scores when utilizing the *Read 180* program. Specifically, researchers reported that *Read 180* students outperformed other student scores in the school district by 8.43% on reading vocabulary and 9.66% on reading comprehension (Kim et al., 2011). Although Kim et al. (2011) reported significantly higher outcomes in regards to comprehension; the two studies shared consistent results showing no significant impact on spelling and fluency. However, in a contrasting study, researchers reported that during the first year of a three-year study, sixth-grade students outperformed comparison students with statistical differences on measures of reading comprehension and fluency (Roberts et al., 2013). Additionally, Walcott et al. (2014) reported that the use of a computer-assisted intervention program resulted in significant fluency gains.

Despite recent research results revealing the inconsistent impact *Read 180* has on student literacy and achievement, research supports the hypotheses that computer-assisted technology could have a significant and consistent impact on middle school student achievement scores in Reading Literacy. Additionally, researchers who have successfully utilized the Scholastic *Read 180* and *System 44* remedial reading programs have reported statistically significant student literacy results (Kim, Capotosto, Hartry, & Fitzgerald, 2011; Papalewis, 2004). In fact, researchers have reported that although students in online reading interventions showed significant gains overall, middle school students who required reading interventions needed ongoing support (Roberts et al., 2013). Furthermore, Vaughn et al. (2012) reported that although computer-assisted reading interventions have shown significant impact on student achievement,

the efficacy of these programs beyond middle school could negatively impact other content areas.

### **The Efficacy of Computer-Assisted Technology**

Much of the literature reviewed revealed computer-assisted web-based technology has a significant impact on student learning. According to Fletcher, Tobias, and Wisher (2007), there is a need to link web-based learning models with specific learning needs. The researchers reported a need for technology-integrated instruction based on affordability and the educational value web-based learning has on student learning perceptions and performances (Fletcher et al., 2007). In one study, researchers presented a web-based framework for the implementation of learning environments, which promoted online learning using a variety of web-based devices (Cabrera-Lozoya, Cerdan, Cano, Garcia-Sanchez, & Lujan, 2012). Researchers reported that the use of web-based learning tools had a significant impact on student achievement, engagement, and satisfaction (Cabrera-Lozoya, et al., 2012). Further review of the literature revealed an overwhelming number of studies supported the findings from the Cabrera-Lozoya et al. (2012) study (McBrian, Jones, & Rui, 2009; Patterson & McFadden, 2009; Roberts, Vaughn, Fletcher, Stuebing, & Barth, 2013; Samruayruen, Enriquez, Natakutoong, & Samruayruen, 2013).

Additional studies reviewed revealed that computer-assisted learning programs also had a significant affect on student participation and student achievement. In a single-subject, across-participants design, researchers analyzed whether a computer-assisted reading intervention program increased literacy in inattentive struggling readers compared to students identified as attentive struggling readers (Walcott, Marett, & Hessel, 2014). Researchers of the Walcott et al. (2014) study reported that a computer-assisted approach to learning was significantly more effective at providing intervention to inattentive readers as compared to their counterparts.

Furthermore, researchers reported that students who learned through computer-assisted technology typically had learning outcomes at least as good as students who participated in face-to-face instruction (Irvin, Hannum, de la Varre, & Farmer, 2010).

### Supporting Theories

Learning theories contribute to understanding the value and usefulness of computer-assisted learning in education (McCarthy, 2010). Educators behavioral and cognitive theories to guide in the design, development, and implementation of lesson activities. Social theorists suggest that learning takes place through the interaction of new knowledge and through collaborative student activities (Jin Nam, 2012; Sargeant, Curran, Allen, Jarvis-Selinger, & Ho, 2006; Walcott et al., 2014). Constructivists suggest that students create meaning and knowledge from the experiences they share in a traditional classroom setting, both individually and with their peers (Sargeant et al., 2006). Scholars typically agree that learning involves building on prior learning experiences, which can be individualized for each student (Dalgarno, 1996; Sargeant et al., 2006).

Computer-assisted, or computer-mediated learning, theories are derived primarily from social and constructivist theories and techniques (Dalgarno, 1996). One formal learning strategy that explicitly uses social learning theory is small-group learning, including problem-based learning and computer-assisted modules. Constructivism can support this learning strategy through direct instruction, computer-based instruction, and through real-world connections. Computer-based instruction emphasizes collaborative learning and targets individual student needs and skill sets (Cabrera-Lozoya, et al., 2012; Fletcher et al., 2007). More specifically, endogenous constructivism focuses on the individual student's knowledge construction, and

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places the teacher in the role of facilitator and support (Dalgarno, 1996). Computer-based learning supports an endogenous constructivist approach to individualized learning.

### **Limitations**

However, Graf and Kinshuk (2006) warn that although web-based technology has proven successful in the field of online learning education there are a number of student learning variables, which must be considered before school administrators begin implementing computer-assisted remedial programs. Other researchers have reported that a computer-assisted remedial program must incorporate cultural diversity from multiple perspectives in order to be effective (Wu & Coady, 2010). Researchers Huang, Lin, and Haung (2012) address Graf and Kinshuk (2006) concerns through a study, which analyzed the mediating processes between variables of student learning and learning online. Researchers from the Huang et al. (2012) study reported that online participation was a mediating construct between learning efficacy and student performance. However, the researchers did acknowledge that it is difficult to determine the degree of influence online participation has on student learning and performance.

### **Summary**

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